

DIALECT CHANGES AND IDIOSYNCRACIES IN THE TEACHING OF A SECOND LANGUAGE TO MINORITY STUDENTS THROUGH THE USE OF AFROCUBAN POETRY

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Each day teachers ask themselves the same question: How can my students relate to the lesson that I am teaching? Teachers know that if students are able to relate to the content of the lesson, they are able to understand what's being taught and learn more effectively. In the majority of the urban school districts, at least 45% of the students in Foreign Language classes are African Americans, Afro-Latinos or other Minorities. Generally, these students (and this is generally the African American students) think that there are no existing connections (such as traditions and customs) that are in common with their own cultures. On the other hand, the Afro-Latino students whom are usually native speakers of Spanish, will be able to learn in detail, other aspects of their cultures and heritages of which they might not have known before. This research will focus on how teachers can utilize poetry to teach the Foreign Language and specifically how to use Afro Cuban poetry to relate to the Minority students and their cultures. It will also explore how to use the dialect changes and idiosyncrasies in Afro Cuban poetry that are similar to those of African American Vernacular English otherwise known as Black English, to teach the Spanish language.